

(On March 30, 1981, after an assassination attempt on Ronald Regan's life, some TV shows were cancelled. Apparently it was felt that shows about violence would be in bad taste. The following is one show that went on.)

THE BEST OF CARSON

monolog jokes about the gas shortage
and Jimmy Carter going down the tubes:
"I knew that wouldn't get a laugh.
you think it's not funny from down there.
you ought to hear it from up here."

tee-shot, eye-sparkling, white-capped smile,
cut to commercials -- back to odds-and-ends
jokes, then bring out the first guest:
angie dickinson, no relation to emily.

questions about location in columbia;
beautiful country but lots of hard work.
on to important stuff: her sex fantasies;
bashful smile; but coddled and stroked,
angie admits to erotic head life; pats,
rubs the king's forearm, hand, as he reels
in fished-for compliment on his sex appeal.

next: tom snyder, reknown asshole, but fellow
talkshow competitor, rumored successor if
johnny carries through his threat to quit.
stab, stab, impale, thrust, skewer,
precious little parry. snyder's writers
have sent him out unarmed; carson's blades
are all double-edged: "tom and I can kid
each other like this because we're friends."
slash, rip, slice, render, draw, quarter.

time for next guest. snyder smiles thru
battered lips: "now i move to this seat
and i'm never heard from again?" johnny:
"you can say anything you want from there.
tell 'em, angie." she has not fluttered
a lash since moving into turret # 2.

ray price. about sixty, still croaking C&W
love songs. toothless. comes when he is called,
heels. talks about comeback after five-year
layoff. no mention of battle with the bottle.
carson jekylls into a Lionel Barrymore/
Dr. Kildare guestside manner, soothes, pats,
inflates the retread ego. commercials.

johnny reads scroll of upcoming guests.
credits roll over.